

December 21, 2025 Fourth Sunday of Advent

Father Randal Kasel, Pastor frkasel@bevcomm.net

Josefina Meyer & Sara McNamara, Staff

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL 749 South Main St., Zumbrota, MN 55992

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OFFICE HOURS: Tues & Thurs 9am-noon, 1-5pm, Wed Closed, Fri 9am-noon

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BULLETIN ARTICLE DEADLINE All articles for the bulletin are due by noon on Wednesday. Please e-mail Saint Paul articles to stpauls@hcinet.net and Saint Michael articles to stmichaeloffice@bevcomm.net. The business office reserves the right to edit articles as time and space allows.

From Father Kasel

Praised be Jesus Christ through Mary!

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

During this month of December, the month dedicated to the Immaculate Conception and the Infancy of Jesus, let us pray for the grace our hearts need to be prepared for the gifts of grace our Lord wills to give each of us! This Sunday we celebrate the 4th Sunday of Advent. I share with you a reflection on *A Time of Hope* in Christ our Lord. I encourage you to reflect over this message a few times this week:

“4th Sunday of Advent - A Time of Hope.

Mary, teacher of hope. The origin of discouragement and dejection. Jesus Christ the Supreme Good: The spirit of Advent largely consists in living close to Our Lady during this time when she is carrying Jesus in her womb. We can think of the whole of our life as a somewhat longer *advent*, a time of waiting for that definitive moment when we will at last find ourselves with God forever. The Christian knows that he has to live this *advent* beside Our Lady every day of his life if he wants to be certain of attaining the only things in the whole of his existence that is really important - finding Christ in this life, and afterwards being with Him in eternity.

There is no better way of preparing for Christmas, which is now so close, than by keeping Mary company, getting to know her and deepening our love and trust in her.

Mary imparts a great joy to our souls, because when we turn to her she leads us to Christ. *Mary teaches us to hope. ‘All generations will call me blessed’, she proclaimed. Humanly speaking, how could she hope for such a thing? Who was she, in the eyes of her contemporaries? The great heroines of the Old Testament - Judith, Esther, Deborah - won a measure of human renown even here on earth... What a contrast between Our Lady’s hope and our own impatience! We call so often upon God to reward us at once for any little good we may have done. For us, no sooner does the very first difficulty appear than we begin to complain. Often we find ourselves incapable of sustaining our efforts, of keeping our hope alive.* (J. Escriva, *Friends of God*, 286)

The ones who become discouraged are not those who undergo difficulties and feel pain. It is those, rather, who do not aspire to sanctity and Eternal Life, those who despair of ever reaching them, who buckle and give up. The attitude of the former is shaped by a lack of Faith, by comfort-seeking, lukewarmness and an excessive attachment to earthly goods, which they consider to be the only good things worth having. Discouragement, if it is not remedied, paralyzes any effort to do good and overcome difficulties. Sometimes discouragement over one’s own failure to advance in sanctity comes about through lack of will-power, through fear of the effort the ascetical struggle entails, and of having to give up disordered attachments of the senses. Not even *apparent* failures in our interior struggle, or in our concern to do apostolate should be cause for dismay. Whoever does things for love of God and for His Glory *never fails. Convince yourself of this truth: your success - this time, in this matter - was to fail. Give thanks to our Lord... and try again!* (idem., *The Way*, 404) *You haven’t failed; you have gained experience. On you go!* (ibid., 405)

In a few days’ time we shall see Jesus in the Crib. The sight will be a proof of God’s Mercy and Love. We will be able to say: *On this Christmas night everything inside me stops.* (continued on page 3)

Welcome to the Churches of

St. Paul &

St. Michael



We are happy that you are here! If you are new to our parishes, please call or stop at the Parish Office. We would love to meet you and answer any questions that you might have!

SACRAMENTS

Confession - Saturday 4:00pm at St. Michael; Sunday 8:25am at St. Paul and 8:00am before daily weekday Holy Mass at both parishes.

Baptism - Please contact the parish office.

Matrimony - Please call Father Kasel at least six months prior to make arrangements.

Anointing of the Sick - This is for someone who is seriously ill, dealing with major surgery or infirm. Please contact Father Kasel to make arrangements.

WEEKEND HOLY MASS SCHEDULE:

Church of Saint Paul - Sunday Confessions at 8:25am, Rosary at 8:20am, Mass at 8:45am

Church of Saint Michael - Saturday Confessions at 4:00pm, Rosary at 4:35pm, Mass at 5:00pm

Church of Saint Michael - Sunday Mass at 7:00am, Rosary at 10:05am, Mass at 10:30am

WEEKDAY HOLY MASS SCHEDULE

Church of Saint Paul - Tuesday and Thursday

Confession 8am & Mass 8:30am, Rosary at 8:10am before Mass

Church of Saint Michael - Wednesday and Friday

Confession 8am and Mass 8:30am

*We wish all the Parishioners of the Churches of St. Paul and St. Michael a Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year.
God bless you! Fr. Kasel and the office staff*

*We invite you to worship our Savior with us
this Advent and Christmas Season!*

Individual Confession times during Advent*:

Sundays, Dec. 21 St. Michael, Pine Island 7:00-7:45 am

Sundays, Dec. 21 St. Paul, Zumbrota 8:30-8:40 am

Wednesday, Dec. 24 St. Michael, Pine Island 1:30-3:00pm

*The Sacrament of Confession is also offered before each weekday Holy Mass

Holy Mass on Christmas Eve:

Wednesday, December 24 St. Paul, Zumbrota 4:00 pm

Wednesday, December 24 St. Michael, Pine Island 4:00 pm

Holy Mass on Christmas Day:

Thursday, December 25 St. Michael, Pine Island 7:00 am (Latin)

Thursday, December 25 St. Paul, Zumbrota 8:45 am

Thursday, December 25 St. Michael, Pine Island 10:30 am

Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Holy Mary, Mother of God - January 1 (Holy Day of Obligation)

Wednesday, December 31 St. Michael, Pine Island 4:00 pm

Thursday, January 1 St. Michael, Pine Island 7:00 am (Latin)

Thursday, January 1 St. Paul, Zumbrota 8:45 am

Thursday, January 1 St. Michael, Pine Island 10:30 am

The next **Holy Hour for Women** will be Sunday, December 28, at 6:00pm at the Church of St. Michael. All women are invited!



CHURCH OF SAINT MICHAEL NEWS

CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL FAITH FORMATION

The next Faith Formation session will be on **Wednesday, January 7, 2026**, at the Church of St. Michael.

Topic for January:

PreK- Grade 3 & Grades 4-6: Part 1-The Holy Trinity and Worship of God; **Confirmation 1, 2, & Adults:** Part 1 - God

6:00-6:30pm - Meal

6:35-7:25pm - Children Class/Parent & Adult Session

7:30-7:45pm - Church for Adoration

At 7:30pm all students, parents and teachers gather in the Church for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

Our program is open for all of our parishioners to attend and it will benefit all ages!

Youth Group Event! All Youth, Grades 7-12, are invited for a prayer, food, and game night Tuesday, **December 30**, from 6:30-8:30pm at the Church of St. Michael, Pine Island. **We are planning a Christmas movie night!** All high school students and confirmation candidates are invited to this youth event. Please RSVP to our parish offices! God bless you!

WORDS TO LIVE BY:

"We must understand that our whole life should be an "advent" in vigilant expectation of Christ's final coming. To prepare our hearts to welcome the Lord who, as we say in the Creed, will come one day to judge the living and the dead, we must learn to recognize His presence in the events of daily life. Advent is then a period of intense training that directs us decisively to the One who has already come, who will come and who continuously comes." *St John Paul II*

"Jesus has chosen to show me the only way which leads to the Divine Furnace of Love; it is the way of childlike self-surrender, the way of a child who sleeps, afraid of nothing, in its father's arms. A God who became so small could only be Mercy and Love." *St Thérèse of Lisieux*

"That the Creator is in His creature and God is in the flesh brings dignity to man without dishonor to Him who made him. Why then, man, are you so worthless in your own eyes and yet so precious to God?" *St Peter Chrysologus*

"For I wish to recall to memory the little Child who was born in Bethlehem. I want to set before our bodily eyes the hardships of His infant needs, how He lay in the manger, how with an ox and ass standing by He lay upon the hay." *St Francis of Assisi (discussing his vision of creating the first nativity creche)*

"Mary, your beauty has delighted the eye of the Thrice-Holy One. He descended from Heaven, leaving His Eternal Throne, and took Body and Blood of your heart, and for nine months lay hidden in a Virgin's Heart. O Mother, Virgin, purest of all lilies, your heart was Jesus' first tabernacle on earth." *St Faustina Kowalska*

"What greater cause is there of the Lord's coming than to show God's Love for us? If we have been slow to love, at least let us hasten to love in return." *St Augustine*

"Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of Eternal Happiness. No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all." *St Leo the Great*

Miriam Dinner - Tuesday, January 27, 6-8pm, at Archdiocesan Catholic Center, St. Paul. Hosted by Archbishop Bernard Hebda and Father Mark Pavlak, Director of Vocations, this is an event for women, ages 16 – 35, who are discerning consecrated life. It is typical for women discerners to be accompanied by their pastor, consecrated religious or youth minister. The evening begins with prayer, followed by dinner with consecrated women sharing their vocations testimonies. Registration is required. REGISTER ONLINE before Thursday, January 22, at 10000vocations.org/events. For questions? please call the Vocation Office 651.962.6890 or email stpaulvocations@10000vocations.org

Pine Island Food Shelf: Our Special item for December is actually **YOUR CHOICE**.

WEEKLY TITHING December 13-14, 2025

Sunday Envelopes:	\$ 1,745.00
Plate:	\$ 1,672.73
EFT:	\$ 960.00
Total:	\$ 4,377.73

Thanksgiving Collection: \$ 6,821.00

Retired Religious Collection: \$ 1,212.00

Immaculate Conception Collection: \$ 816.00

Calling all bookworms! Join the Catholic Authors Book Study. We rotate between spiritual books, literature and writings of Doctors of the Church. On January 13, we will discuss **Waiting for Christ** by Doctor of the Church, St. John Henry Newman. We meet every 2 - 3 weeks, usually on Tuesdays from 7 - 8:30 pm in Rochester.

23rd Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony: All are invited to attend the 23rd Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony at the historic Church of St. Rose (8778 County Highway 11 Blvd., Kenyon, MN) on Sunday, **December 21, at 2:00pm**. Deacon Newell McGee will preside. Music by St. Rose Brass. Reception to follow at the Palof residence. More information at www.friendsofstrose.org.

Institute of Catholic Culture Lecture

THE BEAUTY OF FAITH: Christian Art History 101

Details: Thursdays, **January 22 - June 25**, from 8:00 - 9:15PM ET

(No class on February 19, April 2, April 9, and May 14)

Pre-Class Discussion: 7:30 PM ET, Lecture: 8:00 PM ET

Instructor: Most Rev. James S. Wall, Registration is required.

The last day to apply is Friday, January 9.

Visit: <https://instituteofcatholicculture.org/events/the-beauty-of-faith->

PRO-LIFE QUOTES:

"Give us the grace - when the sacredness of life before birth is attacked, to stand up and proclaim that no one ever has the authority to destroy unborn life." *St. John Paul II*

"The so-called right to abortion has portrayed the GREATEST OF GIFTS—A CHILD—as a competitor, an intrusion, and an inconvenience." *St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

HOLY MASS TIMES

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

8:00am Confessions/8:30am Holy Mass

9:00am-12:00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

1:30-3:00pm Confession

4:00pm Holy Mass on Christmas Eve

Thursday, December 25, 2025

7:00am Latin Holy Mass on Christmas Day

10:30am Holy Mass on Christmas Day

Friday, December 26, 2025

8:00am Confessions/8:30am Holy Mass

Saturday, December 27, 2025

4:00pm-4:50pm Confessions

5:00pm Holy Mass

Sunday, December 28, 2025

7:00am Latin Holy Mass

10:30am Holy Mass

HOLY MASS INTENTIONS

December 24, 2025 Claudia Nassaralla

December 24, 2025 †Audrey Fuchs (Duane & June Andrist)

December 25, 2025 Sis. Maria Sowada (Nancy Sowada)

December 25, 2025 Parishioners

December 26, 2025 †Adam Harmon (Julie Hoerle)

December 27, 2025 †Les DeBoard

December 28, 2025 †Philip Bestgen (Rob & Sue Bestgen)

December 28, 2025 Parishioners



CHURCH OF SAINT PAUL NEWS

(From Father Kasel - from page 1) I am face to face with Him; there is nothing but this Child in the whole of that huge white expanse. He does not say anything, but He is there... He is God loving me. (J. Leclercq, A Year with the Liturgy) And if God becomes man and loves me, how am I going to refuse to seek Him? How am I going to give up hope of finding Him, if He is searching for me? Let us rid ourselves of any suggestion of discouragement. Neither external difficulties nor our personal wretchedness can do anything to quell the Joy of the Christmas which is approaching.

The object of our hope: Hope is recognized clearly throughout the Old Testament as one of the most essential characteristics of the true people of God. All eyes are fixed on the distant future when the Messiah will arrive one day. *The books of the Old Testament describe the history of salvation in the course of which the coming of Christ into the world was slowly prepared.* (Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 55) In *Genesis* we already hear about the victory of the Woman over the powers of evil, about a new world. (cf. Gen. 3:15) The prophet *Hosea* announces that Israel will return to its ancient love and will blossom in it. (Hos. 2:16-25) *Isaiah*, in the midst of the tribulations of the chosen people during the ministry of Ezechiel, announces the coming of the Messiah. (Is. 7:9-14) *Micah* will point to Bethlehem of Judah as the place of His birth. (cf. Mic. 5:2-5)

There are only a few days left before we see Our Lord lying in the manger: *The Prophets proclaimed that He would come, the Virgin Mother carried Him in her womb with boundless love. The Baptist prepared the way for His arrival and announced His presence. He has given to us now the joy of looking forward to the mystery of His birth, so that watching always in prayer we may fittingly celebrate the Christmas feast.* (Second Preface of Advent)

From the stable at Bethlehem to the moment of His Ascension into Heaven, Jesus Christ proclaims a message of hope. Jesus Himself is *our only hope*. (cf. 1 Tim. 1:1) He is the firm pledge that we will attain to the marvelous future we have been promised. We look towards the cave at Bethlehem *in watchful hope*, understanding that it is only in His company that we can *boldly approach God the Father*. (1 Tim. 3:12) Our Lord Himself points out to us that the principal objects of Christian Hope are not the good things of this life which *moth and rust consume, and which thieves can break in and steal* (Matt. 6:19), but the treasures of the 'incorruptible heritage' and, above all, the supreme happiness of the eternal possession of God.

We confidently hope that one day He will give us Eternal Blessedness, and here and now, pardon for our sins, and His grace. As a consequence, Hope offers to everyone the means necessary to achieve what has been promised. Seen in this light, the good things of earth can also find a place within the scope of things to be legitimately hoped for, but only insofar as God orders them to our salvation.

We are going to struggle with all our strength, today and always, against those lesser forms of despair which we can experience as loss of heart and dejection, and an excessive concentration on and a nearly exclusive concern with material things and their possession.

Hope leads us to abandon ourselves in God and to do all that we can to undertake a deliberate ascetical struggle. This struggle will move us to begin again many times, to be constant in the apostolate and patient in adversity; to have a more supernatural outlook on life and its vicissitudes.

In proportion as the world grows weary of its Christian Hope, the alternative is materialism, of a type with which we are already familiar - that and nothing else. The world's experience of Christianity has been like a great love, the love of a lifetime... No new voice... will have any appeal for us, if it does not bring us back to the stable at Bethlehem - there to humble our pride, and enlarge our charity, and deepen our sense of reverence with the sight of a dazzling purity. (R. A. Knox, *Sermon of Christmas*)

Trust in our Lord. Jesus never too late to give us the help and graces we need: *Hearken to me, you stubborn of heart, you who are far from deliverance. I bring near my deliverance; it is not far off, and my salvation will not tarry.* (cf. Is. 46:12-13)

Our hope in God has to be all the greater, the less plentiful the means at our disposal or the more apparently insurmountable the difficulties. On a certain occasion when Jesus returned to Capharnaum, St. Luke tells us, *They were all waiting for Him.* (Luke 8:40-56) In the thick of that crowd one person is singled out by the Evangelist, (continued on page 4)

WEEKLY TITHING December 14, 2025

Sunday Envelopes:	\$ 515.00
Plate:	\$ 74.00
Total:	\$ 589.00

Thanksgiving Collection: \$ 296.50
Retired Religious Collection: \$ 488.00
Immaculate Conception Collection: \$ 285.00

CHURCH OF ST. PAUL FAITH FORMATION

The next Faith Formation session will be on **Wednesday, January 7, 2026**, at the Church of St. Michael.

Topic for January:

PreK- Grade 3 & Grades 4-6: Part 1-The Holy Trinity and Worship of God; **Confirmation 1, 2, & Adults:** Part 1 - God

6:00-6:30pm - Meal

6:35-7:25pm - Children Class/Parent & Adult Session

7:30-7:45pm - Church for Adoration

At 7:30pm all students, parents and teachers gather in the Church for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

Our program is open for all of our parishioners to attend and it will benefit all ages!

"Meal in a Bucket": The Catholic Daughters will be having their annual "Meal in a Bucket" sale for the next few weeks. Pre-order slips are in the back of the church. Available meals are: BBQ with buns, Chili, Potato soup, Portage soup, and Cinnamon rolls. All meals are \$9.00/order. Meals will be available for pick up following Holy Mass on Sunday, January 25. Payment can be given to any CDA member or you can pay when you pick up your orders. If you would like to place a phone order, please contact Sue Hinrichs 507-732-5607. Your support is truly appreciated.

Diaper Drive: Hosted by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #1864 from November 30 - January 4, 2026 (Advent - Epiphany). Please help us by donating diapers to benefit First Choice Clinic in Red Wing. The number of families in our local community served by First Choice Clinic has continued to rise. They receive no government funding. As many of us have seen an increase in our household costs, the clinic has also seen an increase in their operational costs. Please leave diaper donations in the church entry. Thank You! Contact Sue Hinrichs with any questions.

Fellowship Sunday: Please consider hosting a Fellowship Sunday, after the 8:45am Sunday Holy Mass. This is a great opportunity to have fellowship with visitors, new families, and parishioners. A sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board at the entrance of the Church.

Give the gift of an Hour of Adoration for someone. Cards are in the vestibule to send to the recipient.

HOLY MASS TIMES

Tuesday, December 23, 2025

8:00am Confessions/8:30am Holy Mass

9:00am-5:00pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

Wednesday, December 24, 2025

4:00pm Holy Mass on Christmas Eve

Thursday, December 25, 2025

8:45am Holy Mass on Christmas Day

Sunday, December 28, 2025

8:20am Rosary/8:25am Confessions

8:45am Holy Mass

HOLY MASS INTENTIONS

December 23, 2025 †John & Mary Brumm

December 24, 2025 †Kay Hanson (Karen Hodgman)

December 25, 2025 Parishioners

December 28, 2025 Parishioners



NEWS FROM SAINT MICHAEL AND SAINT PAUL

(from page 3) who identifies him as a *ruler of the synagogue*; this man begs Jesus to cure his daughter. *He fell at His feet*. He has no hesitation in giving that public proof of his humility and of his Faith in Him.

Immediately, at an indication from Our Lord, they all move off in the direction of Jairus' house. The girl, twelve years of age, is dying. She must be in her death throes by this time. Just at this very moment, when they have gone part of the way, inconspicuous in the middle of the jostling crowd, a woman who suffers from a hemorrhage that makes her unclean according to the Law, comes up behind Our Lord and touches the edge of His cloak. She too is a woman full of deep humility.

Jairus has demonstrated his Hope and his humility by prostrating himself before Jesus in front of everyone. This woman wants to pass undetected. She is anxious not to take up any of the Master's time. She considers herself too unimportant to be noticed by Our Lord. It is enough if she can touch His cloak.

Both miracles are to be fully accomplished. The woman, for whom the skill of so many doctors has been unavailing, will be cured forever.

Jairus' daughter will go on to live a completely healthy life even though when the retinue arrives, after the delay to their journey, she has breathed her last.

Whilst the encounter with the woman with the issue of blood is taking place, what has become of Jairus? It seems he has fallen into the back-ground, and it is not too difficult to imagine him somewhat distraught, because his daughter had been already on the point of death when he left her to seek out the Master. Jesus, on the other hand, does not appear to be in any hurry. He does not even seem to attach much importance to whatever is happening in Jairus' house.

When Jesus arrives the girl has already died. There is no longer any possibility of preventing her death. It seems that Jesus has arrived too late. And precisely now, when as far as human intervention is concerned nothing can be done, when all natural hope is gone and everything calls for

collapse into grief, the moment has come to awaken supernatural Hope. Jesus never arrives too late. He only demands greater Faith. He waited until it was 'too late' in this instance in order to teach us that supernatural Hope remains, like a solid foundation, amid the ruins of human hope, and all we need is unlimited trust in Him Who can do anything He wills at any moment.

This passage reminds us of our own lives. When it seems sometimes that Jesus has not intervened to meet our need, He then gives us a much greater grace than we have been beseeching Him for. It reminds us of so many occasions in front of the Tabernacle when we have been aware in our heart of words very similar to these: *Do not be afraid; only believe*. To Hope in Jesus is to trust in Him and to let Him act, to let Him do what He will. The greater the trust, the fewer the elements we should need to rely on in human terms.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin is the greatest guarantee of our achieving the means necessary for our salvation and the Eternal Happiness for which we have been destined. Mary is truly 'the port in a storm for those who are shipwrecked.' She is *the consolation of the world, ransom of captives, joy of the sick*. (St. Alphonsus Liguori, *Visit to the Blessed Sacrament*, 2) During these days that precede Christmas, and always, let us ask her to teach us how to Hope in her Son Jesus Christ, the Messiah whose advent was foretold by the prophets. *She shines forth on earth, until the day of the Lord shall come, a sign of sure hope and comfort to the pilgrim People of God*. (Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, 68)

(From: *In Conversation with God* by Francis Fernandez)

Through the intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, St. Joseph, St. Michael, St. Paul and all the Holy Angels, may God grant us the grace to be joyful in union with the Hearts of Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

In Christ through Mary,

Fr. Kasel

<p>MAXON FAMILY Parishioner</p>  <p>Cremation & Life Celebrations 1624 37th Street NW, Rochester, MN 55901</p>	<p> Hub Food Center 228 West Ave. Zumbrota 507-732-7329 https://www.nilssensfoods.com</p>	<p>ZUMBROTA MINI STORAGE</p> <p>LIGHTING—PAVED 24 HOUR ACCESS</p> <p>507-696-4406</p>	
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<p>Safe Environment: The Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis requires all volunteers who interact with minors or vulnerable adults to complete the Essential 3 (background check, Code of Conduct, and VIRTUS training) before beginning their service, and to renew every three years while serving. Please contact the Safe Environment Coordinator for details on how to complete the Essential 3 or do updates.</p> <p>Report Abuse: If you or someone you know has been sexually abused, your first call should be to law enforcement.</p>		<p>Parish Safe Environment Coordinator: Sara McNamara St. Michael: 507-356-4280 stmichaeloffice@bevcomm.net St. Paul: 507-732-5324 stpauls@hcinet.net</p> <p>St. Paul/Minneapolis Archdiocese Victim Assistance Program Hotline: (651) 291-4475</p>	<p>ST. PIO KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL 16016</p> <p>JOIN US Brother Knights of our Council invite you to join us. Contact the Parish Office visit: www.kofc.org/join</p> 